

THE MAYSE FAMILY

In 1765 the Indians raided the Mayse home in Bath County, a few miles from Bath Alum. Joseph Mayse, aged 13 years, his mother, an unknown white girl and Mrs. Sloan and her infant were taken prisoners.

About five or six miles from the Mayse residence the party halted on the top of a high ridge by a large rock to rest awhile. The Indian leader, an old man, sat on this rock. Around his shoulders hung a bear's intestine filled with cornmeal mush. This he would squeeze out and eat for his lunch. Thence the Indians proceeded on a bee line westward over the Warm Springs Mountain, and on the evening of the first day camped on Muddy Run, about five miles north east of the Warm Springs.

On the second day they crossed Jackson's River near Warwickton, Back Creek Mountain, and camped near the mouth of Little Back Creek, now Mountain Grove. The boy prisoner Joseph Mayse, was placed to sleep between two warriors. He was made very uncomfortable by a large root of the tree under which they had lain down to sleep. His suffering becoming too painful to endure, he took one of the Indians by the hand and placed it on the source of his misery. He understood the trouble and made the other lie over and give young prisoner a softer place to sleep.



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The third day they crossed the Allegheny and camped about half way between Marlinton and Huntersville. Early on the fourth day, just after crossing the Greenbrier River at the Island ford, the Indians and their prisoners were overtaken by a pursuing party. The young prisoner was on a pack horse, and it becoming frightened when the skirmish opened, ran off and became entangled in some grape vines. The boy was pulled off into a thicket of nettles. The Indians were so closely pressed they had not time to turn and kill the boy. The Indians were pursued some distance up Stony Creek and Indian Draft, but could not be overtaken. On their return the pursuing party picked up the young prisoner, still in the nettles near the fording, and took him back to the settlement. The late George Mayse, Esq., of the Warm Springs, was a son of the prisoner. The infant had been dashed to death against a tree on the first approach of the pursuers. It was buried near the crossing of the Marlin Run in Marlinton.

Eight or nine years after his captivity Joseph Mayse was a soldier in the battle of Point Pleasant, and was severely wounded. Forty-six years afterwards his wounded leg was amputated above the knee, by Dr. Charles Lewis, who came all the way from Lynchburg, and remained with his patient six weeks. Joseph Mayse served as magistrate between forty-five and fifty years, and was twice high sheriff. His



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memory was considered as reliable as an "official record." His health was such he was never known to take a dose of medicine, and never knew what whiskey and coffee tasted like. He died "serene and calm," in April, 1840, in the 89th year of his age.

Mrs. Mayse, Mrs. Sloan, and the nameless white girl, were taken to the Indian towns near Chillicothe, about 275 miles from Marlinton, by the route taken by their captors. From Chillicothe they made their way towards Detroit. By the aid of friendly Indians they received directions, and finally reached Pennsylvania and thence home, after an absence of about fifteen months.

When her son was wounded at Point Pleasant, October 11, 1774, and she heard where he was, she went with a led horse two hundred and fifteen miles and brought him home early in November.